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29 March 1977

MEMORANDUM FOR THE RECORD

SUBJECT: Meeting on China Matters with Brzezinski and Others

1. On 23 March I was invited by Mike Oksenberg to meet with some of the NSC Staff to discuss a range of matters relating to China. We met in Zbigniew Brzezinski's office. I understand this was one of a series of informal discussions, arranged by the NSC Staff, to sensitize Mr. Brzezinski to problems in the East Asia area. Several such discussions have taken place; others are contemplated. The meetings are unstructured, highly informal and exploratory in nature.

2. Present at the meeting on 23 March were Brzezinski, his deputy, David Aaron, NSC senior staffers for East Asia Michael Armacost and Michael Oksenberg, NSC staffer for Soviet Affairs William Hyland, Richard Holbrooks, Assistant Secretary of State for East Asia, Professor Marshal Shulman, an expert on the USSR (and advisor to Secretary Vance), and myself. In the course of the meeting, which lasted for a little over an hour, the Vice President, who had evidently hoped to see Brzezinski on other matters, dropped in, apparently concluded that the discussion did not require his personal attention, and departed.

3. The meeting had been designed to review primarily various aspects of the Sino-Soviet-US triangle, concentrating especially on the record of interactions in the relationship during the Nixon/Ford years. In fact, much of the discussion, which tended to wander and which was frequently interrupted as Holbrooke and Armacost were called repeatedly to the phone to deal with an unrelated bureaucratic flap, focused primarily on the question of the Chinese perception of its relations with Moscow and Washington and on Peking's view of its role in the world. It quickly became clear that Mr. Brzezinski had not explored

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most of these matters in his own mind, and the discussion was devoted mostly to giving him a frame of reference in these areas. The conversation ended inconclusively.

4. No decisions were taken or policy lines laid down at the meeting. It is possible, however, that Mr. Brzezinski will require background papers worked up jointly by the East Asian experts participating in the discussion in addition to further discussion of matters relating to China.



China Issues Officer, CPS

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